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Advocate of Peace.

VOL. LXVII.

BOSTON, OCTOBER, 1905.

No. 9

THE AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY,

PUBLISHERS,

31 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

MONTHLY, ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR. TEN CENTS PER COPY

Entered at the Boston Post Office as Second Class Matter.

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The End of the Russo-Japanese War.

It has been a long time since the civilized world gave such a sigh of relief as it did on the last day of August, when the announcement was made from Portsmouth that the Russian and Japanese peace envoys had come to terms, and that a treaty of peace would be forthwith signed.

The proceedings of the Commissioners, so far as they could be known, had been watched daily with deep interest and solicitude, and people everywhere stood appalled when the negotiations threatened, seemingly, to end in failure, and the great armies in Manchuria to fall again upon each other in deadly conflict. The war had from the beginning been deplored as no other war of history had been, and it had at last come to be a depressing burden upon the conscience of the world not easy longer to bear. In Europe the feeling of regret over the war was deeper even than in this country, and the sense of relief correspondingly greater at its termination.

As for ourselves, notwithstanding the alarming rumors daily given out by the press, and the hitches which occurred in the negotiations, we never had any doubts, after the Commissioners had once met, that peace would be the outcome of their conference. The situation was such that any other result was practically inconceivable. The war had become immensely burdensome financially; it had desolated

multitudes of homes in both countries; the continuance of it, on the vast scale which it had reached, would have been enough, after the losses and burdens already incurred, to strain both governments to the breaking point; to have gone back to it, after the Portsmouth meeting had once begun, would have been to the United States, through the good offices of whose President the negotiations had been opened on our soil, an act of discourtesy amounting almost to insult. These considerations, as well as the general pressure of public reprobation of the war, seem to have weighed heavily with the responsible experienced statesmen at both Tokyo and St. Petersburg, and thus the end of the war came.

The action of President Roosevelt in urging upon the two governments, after the naval battle of the Sea of Japan, to open at once negotiations to see if terms of peace could not be agreed upon, was a timely and courageous move, worthy of the universal recognition and appreciation which it has received. The merit of it was all the greater because of the general apathy and unwillingness of the European heads of government to make any move for peace, either separately or jointly. It must not be forgotten, however, that the American people, or at least a considerable portion of them, are entitled to share in the credit of whatever was done here for the termination of the war. Time and again, after every great battle, and especially after the fall of Port Arthur, the President was urged by the peace societies, by chambers of commerce, by civic and religious bodies, and by many individuals, to offer to mediate, either alone or with other governments, between the fighting nations. All his powerful efforts, during the negotiations, to bring them to a successful issue, were backed by the people who were insistent that the war should stop. The President spoke opportunely and bravely, especially at the critical moment toward the close of the Conference, but he was the spokesman of the people as well as of himself.

It is to be hoped that the terms on which the war has been brought to an end, as provided in the treaty which we give on another page, will prove to be such as to ensure permanent peace in the Far East. It seems monstrous that, at this advanced stage of the world's history, a new region like that in Manchuria, capable of realizing a great and powerful civilization, should have to be the scene of gigantic struggles of barbarous brute violence, like those experienced by Europe when she was just emerging from darkness.